Effective Programs and Strategies
to Create Safe Schools

2/8/99

I. Introduction

There are many programs and strategies that can reduce or prevent violence in schools. This document presents several examples of programs and strategies that are well designed and can be implemented in schools across the nation. The models presented here are only a few examples; many other equally effective models are not presented. These models can be adapted to meet the needs of any local area through a process that includes planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision.

Evidence for the effectiveness of programs and strategies to promote environments conducive to learning is preliminary but growing steadily. Because evaluations vary widely in their methodology and rigor, and as a result in the trustworthiness of their findings, we have designated each of the programs as either demonstrated or promising.

Demonstrated models are supported by research-based evidence from controlled studies. However, many of these findings have not been replicated; thus their stability and generalizability have not yet been established. In the evaluation of demonstrated models, two groups of youth were examined before and after an intervention; one group received the intervention, while the other did not. The intervention group demonstrated a larger reduction or a lesser increase in violence over time than the control (or comparison) group.

Promising models have the appropriate components for successful intervention, but have not yet been supported by rigorous evaluations. Most of these programs have been examined. For some, there were controlled studies, but positive trends were found instead of significant results. For others, the research designs were too weak to be sure that the program caused the positive effects (significant results or trends) found. The rest of these programs are based on strategies and program components that have been found effective in previous research. In order to be designated promising without having been evaluated, the program must be clearly designed to achieve at least one of the objectives outlined in the "Comprehensive Framework" and must have a sound theoretical rationale.

Because violent behavior is the result of a wide variety of both internal and external

causes, the key to increasing school safety is selecting programs and strategies that can be combined to form a comprehensive plan for addressing local problems. This involves meeting several challenges. To make the task of developing and implementing a comprehensive plan manageable, the Institute has written a guide, the "Comprehensive Framework for School Violence Prevention." The guide divides the essential components of comprehensive prevention plans into six categories that have also been used to organize the programs and strategies presented below: administrative approaches, school security, schoolwide education in violence prevention, counseling, alternative education, and community involvement. This list of programs and strategies also includes a section of comprehensive school-based programs.

II. Models

A. Administrative Approaches

BASIS is a *demonstrated* middle school model that focuses on procedures for discipline. Clarifying and consistently enforcing school rules, improving classroom management and organization, tracking student behaviors (good and bad), reinforcing positive behaviors, and increasing the frequency of communication with parents about student behavior are emphasized. A multiyear, multisite study (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993) found that classroom disruption decreased and attention to academic work increased significantly in the schools in which the program was well implemented. [Contact: Denise Gottfredson, University of Maryland, Department of Criminology, Lefrak Hall, Room 2220, College Park, MD 20742, Tel: 301-405-4717, Fax: 301- 405-4733, dgottfredson@bss2.umd.edu]

Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline is a *demonstrated* model designed to build resilience with inner-city elementary, middle, and high school youth. The key components of the program are problem prevention; a caring environment; student involvement, cooperation, and leadership opportunities; student and teacher responsibility for classroom organization; and community involvement activities. Consistency management entails creating a supportive and caring environment through several methods of classroom and instructional planning. By giving all students minor and major leadership opportunities, cooperative discipline teaches students self-discipline. At least 70 percent of the staff must vote in favor of this program before it can be implemented. Ideally, it is adopted by all of the schools in a geographic feeder system so that students can receive consistent and sustained messages about self-discipline throughout their education. Research has found that this model leads to gains in student achievement and teaching time and decreases in student discipline referrals (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). [Contact: H. Jerome Freiberg, Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline, College of Education, University of Houston, Houston, TX 77204-5874, Tel: 713-743-8663, Fax: 713-743-8664, CMCD@uh.edu *or* www.coe.uh.edu/~freiberg/cm/]

The Constructive Discipline Model of Los Angeles County, CA, is a *demonstrated* intervention that takes a multifaceted approach to reducing violence and vandalism among fourth through eighth grade students. School staff are trained to reinforce appropriate behaviors, identify factors

that contribute to violence and vandalism, and develop a schoolwide behavioral improvement plan. In addition, school counselors are trained in the use of behavioral consultation methods. One study of several schools found that vandalism fell by an average of 78.5 percent (Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983). [Contact: Gus Frías, Safe Schools Coordinator, Los Angeles County Office of Education, 9300 Imperial Highway, #281, Downey, CA 90242, Tel: 562-922-6391, Fax: 562-922-6781]

SPIR (Student Problem Identification and Resolution) is a *promising* model for responding to violent episodes that erupt in schools over racial bias among students. Because this program must be facilitated by a trained adult, regional centers maintain staff to respond quickly to ethnic conflicts and hate crimes with a variety of programs and services. Students, faculty, community leaders, and parents are brought together to identify and resolve problems. No evaluation data are available. [Contact: U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, 600 E Street, NW, Suite 2000, Washington, DC 20530, Tel: 202-305-2935, Fax: 202-305-3009, www.usdoj.gov/crs]

B. School Security

The Comprehensive School Security a *promising* tool for examining school safety. This model integrates and expands on several school safety assessment instruments to provide a comprehensive look at school facilities and broader issues of school security. Key instruments used in developing the assessment include—

- Security Survey Form. (1982). Reston, VA: TDC Associates.
- School Security: "Get a Handle on a Vandal." (1981). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Justice, School Safety Center.
- The School Crime Assessment Tool. (1990). In National School Safety Center, "School Pepperdine University Press.

[Contact: The Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence, 1925 North Lynn Street, Suite 305, Rosslyn, VA 22209, Tel: 703-527-4217, Fax: 703-527-8741]

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a *promising* model for preventing violence by applying architectural design and space management concepts to school buildings and grounds. The goals are to provide access control, surveillance through physical design and mechanical devices, congestion reduction, defensible space, psychological deterrents to violence, user monitoring, and territorial identity. Several of the design issues are focused on reducing the presence of weapons in the school and eliminating dark or hidden spaces where violence can occur. CPTED reduced one school's reported crime rate by 86 percent over a 4-year period (McKay, 1992). [Contact: National Crime Prevention Institute, Shelby Campus,

University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40222; Superintendent of Documents U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402]

The use of **school security professionals** is a *promising* means of reducing violence in schools. Security professionals are typically in-house support staff with varying levels of authority and responsibility, based on school policies and State or local laws. The number of security employees can range from one person to hundreds, depending on school district size, needs, and resources, and many schools use outside professional school security consultants for training and technical assistance. Both in-house staff and outside consultants assist in reducing and managing violence by conducting security assessments, providing staff development programs, developing crisis preparedness guidelines, identifying security equipment needs (such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras), designing enforcement and investigation techniques, and enhancing links with community officials (Trump, 1998). [Contact: Kenneth S. Trump, Chair, K–12 Subcommittee, American Society for Industrial Security, and President, National School Safety and Security Services, P.O. Box 110123, Cleveland, OH 44111, Tel: 216-251-3067, Fax: 216-251-4417, kentrump@aol.com]

W.A.R.N. (Weapons Are Removed Now) is a *promising* model for elementary through high school students. The objective of W.A.R.N. is for students to take personal responsibility for anonymously warning school officials when they hear about or see a weapon at school. Key components include a toll-free hotline connecting students to the school administrator's office, skits performed by trained high school students in which a student is shot because no one took responsibility for warning a school official, a pledge to report weapons, and membership in a national network. No evaluation data are available. [Contact*:* Dr. Jay J. Shaffer, W.A.R.N. Reseda High School, 18230 Kittredge Street, Reseda, CA 91335, Tel: 818-881-0280]

C. Schoolwide Education in Violence Prevention

Aggressors, Victims, & Bystanders: Thinking and Acting to Prevent Violence is a *demonstrated* curriculum for middle schools in high-risk communities. The curriculum is composed of 12 classroom sessions that deal with violence among peers and the separate but interrelated roles of aggressors, victims, and bystanders that youth play in potentially violent situations. The backbone of this curriculum is the four-step "Think-First Model of Conflict Resolution." The model helps students to pause and keep cool, understand what is going on before jumping to conclusions, define their problems and goals in ways that will not lead to fights, and generate positive solutions. The curriculum has been tested in urban, suburban, and small-city school districts and has made students more supportive of resolving conflicts without aggression (Slaby, Wilson-Brewer, & DeVos 1994). [Contact: Christine Blaber, Education Development Center Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Suite 25, Newton, MA 02458, Tel: 800-225-4276 ext. 2364, Cblaber@edc.org OR to order the curriculum: Education Development Center, Inc., P.O. Box 1020, Sewickley, PA 15143-1020, Tel: 800-793-5076, Fax: 412-741-0609]

Conflict Resolution: A Curriculum for Youth Providers is a *demonstrated* model for secondary schools. Key elements include helping students define conflict, learning three types of

conflict resolution, and reviewing basic communications behavior. Each session contains at least one skills-building exercise and lasts from 15 to 50 minutes. This program has been found effective in reducing violence and the frequency of fights resulting in injuries requiring medical treatment (DuRant et al., 1996). [Contact: National Resource Center for Youth Services, College of Continuing Education, University of Oklahoma, 202 West 8th Street, Tulsa, OK 74119, Tel: 918-585-2986, Fax: 918-592-1841, www.nrcys.ou.edu/default.htm]

Dating Violence Prevention Program is a *demonstrated* curriculum for changing attitudes condoning dating violence among high school students. Key elements include—

- promoting equity in dating relationships
- challenging attitudes toward violence as a means of conflict resolution
- improving communications skills
- supporting victims of dating violence
- seeking help for those involved in violent relationships.

An evaluation of the program showed that students were significantly less favorable toward using dating violence as a means of resolving conflict (Avery-Leaf, Cascardi, O'Leary, & Cano, 1997). [Contact: K.D. O'Leary, Department of Psychology, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794-2500, Tel: 516-632-7852, doleary@psych1.psy.sunysb.edu *or* www.psy.sunysb.edu/marital]

Life Skills Training (LST) is a *demonstrated* model for mixed ethnic students with 20 sessions in the 7th grade, 10 sessions in the 8th grade, and 5 sessions in the 9th grade. Students are taught personal self-management skills, general social skills, drug resistance skills, adaptive coping strategies, assertiveness, and decisionmaking by either adults or peer leaders. LST has been able to reduce excessive drinking and weekly marijuana use (Botvin , Baker, Dusenbury, Botvin, & Diaz, 1995). [Contact: Gilbert J. Botvin, Institute for Prevention Research, Cornell University Medical Center, 411 East 69th Street, Room KB 201, New York, NY 10021, Tel: 212-746-1270]

PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) is a *demonstrated* model for kindergarten through fifth grade children. The program is designed to promote emotional competence through expression, understanding, and regulation of emotions. Cognitive problem-solving skills are also taught. The main objectives are for students to learn new skills and be able to apply those skills in daily life. Improvements have been found in students' hyperactivity, peer aggression, and conduct problems (Elliot, 1997). [Contact the publisher: Developmental Research and Programs, Tel: 800-736-2630, www.drp.org/paths.html, *or* DrpMman@aol.com, OR contact the developer: Mark Greenberg, Prevention Research Center, Henderson Building S., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, Tel: 814-235-3053, mxg47@psu.edu]

Project ALERT is a *demonstrated* social resistance skill curriculum for ethnically mixed students that consists of 11 weekly lessons in the 6th or 7th grade and 3 booster lessons in the 7th or 8th grade. Key components include counteracting beliefs that most people use drugs, developing

reasons not to use, identifying where pressures to use drugs come from, and building a repertoire of skills to resist pro-drug pressures. Parental involvement is encouraged through home learning opportunities. Project ALERT has decreased marijuana and alcohol use among seventh graders, but effects diminish without booster lessons during the following year (Ellickson & Bell, 1990; Ellickson, Bell, & McGuigan, 1993). [Contact: Project ALERT, 725 South Figueroa St., Suite 1615, Los Angeles, CA 90017-5416, Tel. 800-253-7810, alertplus@aol.com *or* www.projectalert.best.org]

Project Northland is a *demonstrated* multiple-level, 3-year alcohol use prevention intervention for students in grades six through eight. The program includes alcohol use prevention curricula, activities to link students to the community, and parent participation in alcohol education. The project also offers students school-based opportunities for alcohol-free extracurricular activities. Before the program, students in the intervention group used alcohol significantly more than students in a comparison group. After the intervention, however, students who received it reported less alcohol use than those in the comparison group. (Perry et al., 1996). [Contact for ordering curricula: Hazelden Publishing Group, P.O. Box 176, Center City, MN 55012, Tel: 800-328-9000, www.hazelden.org OR contact for other questions: Project Northland, University of Minnesota, 1300 South Second Street, Suite 300, Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015, Tel: 612-624-1818]

RCCP (Resolving Conflict Creatively Program), an initiative of Educators for Social Responsibility, is a *demonstrated* school-based program that cultivates the emotional, social, and ethical development of children through teaching concepts and skills in conflict resolution and intergroup relations. The RCCP model includes the following components: professional development for teachers, regular classroom instruction for K–12 students, peer mediation, and training in the concepts and skills of conflict resolution and bias awareness for administrators and parents. Initial results from a rigorous evaluation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveal a significant positive impact on children who receive a substantial amount of instruction in the curriculum (Aber, Jones, Brown, Chaudry, & Samples, 1998). Currently RCCP is being implemented in 11 diverse school districts across the country. [Contact: RCCP National Center, 40 Exchange Place, Suite 1111, New York, NY 10005, Tel: 212-509-0022, Fax: 212-509-1095, esrrccp@aol.com]

Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) is a *demonstrated* sixth-grade curriculum tested in ethnically mixed populations. Key elements include—

- working in small groups
- problem solving
- identifying feelings
- handling differences
- using peer mediation
- clarifying values
- dealing with prejudice

- avoiding, ignoring, diffusing, and resolving conflicts.

The problem-solving component includes several steps, which students memorize and practice frequently: stop, calm down, identify the problem and your feelings about it, decide among nonviolent options (resolve, avoid, ignore, or diffuse), do it, look back, and evaluate. A program evaluation funded by the CDC showed that RIPP significantly reduced fights and incidents of being threatened with a weapon (Drug Strategies, 1998). [Contact: Aleta Lynn Meyer, Life Skills Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, 800 W. Franklin, P.O. Box 842018, Richmond, VA 23284-2018, Tel: 888-572-1572, Fax: 804-828-0239]

Safe Dates is a *demonstrated* model developed for eighth and ninth graders that includes school and community components. The school components (a 10-session curriculum, a play, and a poster contest) focus on changing norms for dating violence and deal with gender stereotyping, conflict management skills, belief in need for help, awareness of services, and help-seeking behaviors. The community component includes training for service providers, a crisis line, and a support group for teen victims. An evaluation of Safe Dates indicated that the treatment group committed less psychological abuse, sexual violence, and violence perpetration against their current dating partners than did those in the control group (Foshee et al., 1998). [Contact: Vangee Foshee, Department of Health Behavior and Health Education, School of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Campus Box 7400, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, Tel: 919-966-6616 or 919-966-6353, vfoshee@sph.unc.edu]

The School Safety Program is a *demonstrated* model for identifying high schools' violence problems and devising effective responses. The program's main components include a curriculum integrated into a required 11th grade social studies course that trains students to be problem solvers, engaging them in solving their school's problems; identifying problem students through reviews by teachers and police; and conducting regular meetings among teachers, school administrators, and the police. An evaluation found a 13-percent reduction in students at an intervention school who reported that they had to fight to defend themselves but a 2-percent increase in a comparison school. In addition, threats to teachers decreased 17 percent in an intervention school yet increased by 5 percent in a comparison school (Kenney & Watson, 1996). [Contact: Dennis Kenney, Director of Research, Police Executive Research Forum, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 930, Washington, DC 20036, Tel: 202-466-7820, Fax: 202-466-7826, www.policeforum.org, dkennedy@intr.net]

Second Step is a *demonstrated* curriculum designed to insert skills-based training into existing school curricula and encourage the transfer of skills to behavior at school and at home. Age-appropriate materials are used in Pre-K through middle schools. The Pre-K through grade five versions of Second Step also have a 6-week parent education component. The elementary program teaches empathy, impulse control, and anger management. The middle school program includes understanding the violence problem, empathy, anger management, problem solving, and applying skills to everyday situations. A randomized treatment/control study (Grossman et al., 1997) showed that physical aggression decreased from autumn to spring among students who

were in the program but increased among students who were in a comparison group. [Contact: Committee for Children, 2203 Airport Way S., Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98134, Tel: 800-634-4449, Fax: 206-343-1445, www.cfchildren.org]

STAR (Straight Talk About Risks) is a *promising* model for preventing gun-related violence among Pre-K through 12th grade students. There are four curricula (pre-K to grade 2, and grades 3 to 5, 6 to 8, and 9 to 12), and English and Spanish versions of all curricula are available. For younger children the focus is on obeying rules, staying safe, and learning that guns are not toys. In the middle grades students explore media violence, reasons why people are violent, and methods for coping with conflict. The high school version fosters discussions on the consequences of handgun violence, gun violence and youth, and stress as a potential cause of violence. Students in grades 9–12 have shown reduced levels in the probability that they would use a gun under a variety of circumstances (DeVos, Hendrix, & Goetz, 1994). [Contact: Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1225 Eye Street NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005, Tel: 202-289-7319]

D. Counseling

The Anger Coping Program is a *demonstrated* model for selected male middle school students. The program consists of 18 weekly, small group sessions during the school day, led by a school counselor and a mental health counselor. The lessons emphasize self-management and monitoring skills, perspective-taking skills, and social problem-solving skills. Aggressive boys who have been through the Anger Coping program have been found to have lower rates of drug and alcohol involvement and higher levels of self-esteem and problem-solving skills than those who have not (Lochman, 1992). [Contact: John E. Lochman, Professor and Saxon Chair of Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology, Box 870348, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, Tel: 205-348-5083, Fax: 205-348-8648, jlochman@gp.as.ua.edu]

The Coping Power Program is a *demonstrated* model for preventing substance use among middle school boys. Although this intervention uses much of the same material as the Anger Coping Program, it has been extended to 33 small group sessions for students and adds 16 sessions for parents. Initial results indicated that the Coping Power program increased aggressive boy's social competence and decreased their substance use (Lochman, personal communication, August 1998). [Contact: John E. Lochman, Professor and Saxon Chair of Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology, Box 870348, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, Tel: 205-348-5083, Fax: 205-348-8648, jlochman@gp.as.ua.edu]

Peer Culture Development (PCD) is a *demonstrated* program run by counselors as a for-credit class for at-risk junior high and high school students. This program is founded on several assumptions, including—

- peers have great influence on one another
- peer influence can be positive

- self-confidence can be gained by being of service to others
- adolescents who have learned to solve their own problems can help others by sharing their experiences.

Each class is conducted as a group counseling session in which problems are reported and resolved, and the trained PCD counselor provides insight. An evaluation by Hoover (1984) found that PCD students showed a 44-percent reduction in police contacts, while the control group showed a 36-percent increase in police contacts for the same period. All of the PCD schools also showed a reduction (55 percent and greater) in the number of property offenses (for example, school vandalism and locker break-ins), a reduction of about 66 percent in the number of personal offenses (such as robbery, physical assaults, rape, and fights), and a 43-percent reduction in gang activity. [Contact: Todd Hoover, School of Education, MC Campus, Loyola University, 1041 Ridge Road, Wilmette, IL 60091, Tel: 847-853-3320]

GRASP is a *promising* peer-run intervention for helping youth resist social pressures to join or continue participating in gangs. Key components include weekly sessions focused on sharing experiences; small groups led by youth who have left gangs; challenging gang norms and values; and an adult advisory group that provides crisis intervention and legal, educational, and employment assistance. A pilot study of this program found that it was able to reduce gang affiliation, arrests, and violence-related injuries (Hritz & Gabow, 1997). [Contact: Susan A. Hritz, 3550 S. Gilpin Street, Cherry Hills, CO 80110]

The School Transitional Environment Program is a *promising* model for youth in transition from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school. Key components include easing student transition between schools, using homeroom teachers to link parents and students to the school, counseling students, and identifying students with additional needs through weekly teacher meetings. [Contact: Robert D. Felner, Department of Education, 705 Chafee, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881, Tel: 401-277-5045, Fax: 401-874-5471]

E. Alternative Education

Short Term

Contingencies for Learning Academic and Social Skills (CLASS) is a *demonstrated* model for kindergarten through second grade students. The model was tested in Torrance, CA, and Honolulu and Keneohe, HI, in ethnically mixed schools. Behavioral procedures are designed to train teachers or other staff to modify the disruptive behavior of the acting-out child in the classroom. Key components include—

- token economy
- response cost
- systematic suspension
- contingency contracting

- recycling or branching

An evaluation found that students who participated in the program had a 7-percent increase in appropriate behavior, while students in a control group had a 2-percent decrease (Hops et al., 1978). [Contact: Educational Achievement Systems, 11410 Northeast 124th Street, Suite 128, Kirkland, WA 98034, Tel: 1-877-ED-PROOF or 206-769-8155, www.edresearch.com]

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a *demonstrated* model that pays middle and high school students who are behind grade level or have been retained for 1 or more years to tutor elementary school children. In preparation to tutor the young children, and on an ongoing basis, the tutors receive extra academic help as well. One of the major goals of the program is to teach the tutors the value of education and increase their bonding to the school. Cárdenas, Montecel, Supik, and Harris (1992) found that after 2 years only 1 percent of the students in the program had dropped out of school, whereas 12 percent of the comparison students had dropped out. [Contact: Linda Cantu, Communications Manager, Intercultural Development Research Association, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228, Tel: 210-684-8180, Fax: 210-684-5389]

PACT (Positive Adolescent Choices Training) is a *demonstrated* model for middle school and high school African-American and other high-risk youth selected by teachers for conduct problems or histories of victimization. Using videotaped vignettes and role playing, students in small groups of 10–12 learn social skills, such as giving positive and negative feedback, accepting feedback, negotiation, problem solving, and resisting peer pressure. Students who have been through PACT have had 50 percent less physical aggression at school and more than 50 percent fewer violence-related juvenile court charges than a comparable group who did not receive PACT (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1995). [Contact: Betty R. Yung, Director, Center for Child and Adolescent Violence Prevention Wright State University, School of Professional Psychology, Ellis Human Development Institute, 9 North Edwin C. Moses Boulevard, Dayton, OH 45407, Tel: 937-775-4300, Fax: 937-775-4323, byung@desire.wright.edu]

Reconnecting Youth is a *demonstrated* model for students in grades 9–12 showing signs of poor school achievement, multiple problem behaviors, and the potential for dropping out of high school. Key elements include social support and skills training, personal growth classes, and social activities to promote school bonding. Two studies have found improvements in school performance and reductions in substance use and suicide risk (Drug Strategies, 1998). In addition, the Texas Education Agency has recently approved Reconnecting Youth for use as a for-credit class in Texas public schools. [Contact: Derek Richey, National Education Service, P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402-0008,Tel: 800-733-6786, www.nes.org]

Long Term

The Alternative Education Program is a *promising* model for ninth grade students at Minnie Howard School in Alexandria, VA. For the population designated as at risk of dropping out and

having behavior problems, an alternative team was formed to teach students the content of courses with a high degree of individualization, while addressing skill development gaps; infuse violence prevention into the curriculum; provide a welcoming climate to improve students' motivation to attend school; provide genuine school-to-work opportunities for each student; and deliver parent education and support through regular home visitation. This program is currently being evaluated. [Contact: Margaret Walsh, Principal, Minnie Howard School, 3801 West Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302, Tel: 703-824-6750]

The Stafford County Alternative Education Program is a *promising* initiative that gives students two options for successfully completing high school. The first option is a regional education center for violent, weapons-carrying, or controlled-substance-carrying students. It offers academic, counseling, family, and transportation services to help students complete the school year and successfully return to their regular schools. Turning Point, the second option, is a school for members of the community who have not completed high school (primarily those ages 17–21) and for high school students with a very high risk of dropping out. Program staff report that success depends on providing students with choices regarding their placement, written expectations or contracts for students to sign, teaching teams, a small student population, and flexibility with a focus on meeting student needs. No evaluation data are available. [Contact: G. Scott Walker, Director of Alternative and Adult Education, Stafford County Public Schools, 35 Potomac Creek Drive, #97, Falmouth, VA 22405, Tel: 540-659-9899]

F. Comprehensive School-Based Strategies and Programs

First Step to Success is a *demonstrated* program with proactive screening of all kindergartners, a school intervention using the CLASS program (mentioned above, which trains teachers to use behavioral methods to decrease classroom disruption), and parent training to support children's adjustment to school. In early evaluations First Step to Success appeared to reduce aggression and maladaptive behavior, as well as the long-term probability that at-risk children will adopt a delinquent lifestyle during their youth (Walker, et al., 1998). [Contact: Sopris West, 4093 Specialty Place, Longmont, CO 80504, Tel: 800-547-6747, Fax: 303-776-5934, www.sopriswest.com]

The Midwestern Prevention Project (referred to as Project STAR but unrelated to the Straight Talk About Risks program mentioned above) is a *demonstrated* model for youth ages 10–15. Key elements include a 2-year social influence curriculum, a mass media intervention, and a parent program, which teaches family communication skills and helping children with Project STAR homework. This project has been able to reduce smoking by 40 percent and show smaller reductions in marijuana and alcohol use (Elliot, 1997). [Contact: Angela Lapin, Project Manager, Center for Prevention Policy Research, Department of Preventive Medicine, University of Southern California, 1441 E. Lake Avenue, MS-44, Los Angeles, CA 90033-0800, Tel: 323-865-0325]

Peace Builders7 is a *demonstrated* model for students of mixed ethnicity in kindergarten through fifth grade, which has been tested in urban and suburban elementary schools. Peace Builders should be viewed as a way of life rather than a program because it attempts to change the characteristics of the school setting that trigger aggressive, hostile behavior. This program seeks to increase the frequency of prosocial models to enhance social competence and decrease the frequency and intensity of aggressive behaviors. Using a pre-/post-, quasi-experimental design, Flannery and colleagues (1998) found that this program improved students' social competence (especially if they had 2 years' exposure to the program) and buffered expected increases in their aggressive behavior. The researchers also found that males benefited significantly more than females from participation. [Contact: Jane Gulibon, Heartspringsﬡ, Inc., P.O. Box 12158, Tucson, AZ 85732, Tel: 800-368-935, www.peacebuilders.com *or* custrel@heartsprings.org]

Project ACHIEVE is a *demonstrated* school reform and intervention program targeting academically and socially at-risk and underachieving students in elementary through high schools. Project ACHIEVE places particular emphasis on improving the social behavior of students, increasing student performance in the areas of social skills and aggression control, and in reducing incidents of school-based violence. This is done through an integrated process that involves strategic planning, comprehensive in-service training and followup, and parent and community involvement. Project ACHIEVE training involves teachers, administrators, school support staff (custodians, cafeteria and office workers, bus drivers), and parents. The goals of Project ACHIEVE include—

- enhancing staff problem-solving skills
- improving classroom management and school safety
- ensuring that the school provides comprehensive services to students with low academic achievement
- increasing parent involvement in helping with homework and teaching social skills
- making each staff member believe that everyone is responsible for every student.

In one school, over the first 3 years of implementation, the total disciplinary referrals to the office decreased by 28 percent (with large decreases in disobedience and fighting and smaller decreases in disruptiveness, abusive behavior, and disrespect). Suspensions decreased by two-thirds (Quinn, Osher, Hoffman, & Hanley, 1998). [Contact: Howard M. Knoff, Department of Psychological Foundations, School Psychology Program, FAO 100U, Room 268, Tampa, FL 33620-7750, Tel: 813-974-9498, Fax: 813-974-5814, knoff@tempest.coedu.usf.edu]

Social Thinking Skills is a *demonstrated* program for teaching problem solving and interpersonal skills to high-risk junior and senior high school students and youthful offenders. This program was designed to teach, have students practice, and reinforce skills that aggressive and violent youth tend to be lacking. At the core of the program are ten problem solving steps that teach impulse control, anger management, assertive skills, social insights, and decisionmaking:

1. Recognize a problem exists

2. Stop and get ready to think
3. Invisible step (can the problem be ignored?)
4. State the problem and goals
5. Get the facts
6. Make plans
7. Pick the best
8. Be prepared
9. Take action
10. Check it out.

This program has been field tested in four evaluation studies. One study evaluated high-risk sixth and seventh grade students (based on teachers' ratings of need for supervision, motivation, academic potential, social interaction skills, teachability, and need for special education) and randomly assigned them to treatment and control groups. There were fewer incidents of classroom removal and better grades among students in the treatment group (Larson, 1989). Social Thinking Skills has a revised 1997 edition. [Contact: Dr. Katherine Larson, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106, Tel: 805-658-9332, larson@education.ucsb.edu]

Talent Development Middle Schools and High Schools developed by CRESPAR (Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk) are *demonstrated* interventions in ethnically mixed schools in Baltimore, Washington, DC, and Philadelphia. Key components of the high school model include—

- dividing a standard high school into five or more smaller, separately administered, and separately housed academies; the ninth grade, in one academy, is where students choose an academic or career-focused academy for the subsequent 3 years (Arts and Humanities, Business and Finance, Sport Studies and Health/Wellness, or Transportation/Engineering Technologies)
- creating interdisciplinary teams of ninth grade teachers who share the same group of students
- having homeroom teachers and classes assigned in 10th grade remain the same through the 12th grade; the homeroom teacher serves as a "coach" to provide a caring and supportive human environment with support for personal problems
- using a common core curriculum in all academies
- providing a college preparatory curriculum with a career focus for all students
- removing the anonymity that fosters disciplinary problems by reducing school size
- creating longer classes for more in-depth instruction, higher quality adult-student relationships, and less time in the hallways changing classes
- assigning each student to a specific adult within the school to talk to and for assistance with problems.

At the high school level the program has been found to have positive effects in many areas including reducing student fights, vandalism, absenteeism, student apathy, drug use, and physical

and verbal abuse of teachers. Improvements in student attendance, promotion rates, and academic achievement have been found at the middle school level (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). [Contact: CRESPAR, Johns Hopkins University, CSOS, 3505 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, Tel: 410-516-8800 and Howard University, Department of Psychology, Washington, DC 20059, Tel: 202-806-8484, http://scov.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/CReSPaR.html]

Gang Risk Intervention Program (GRIP) is a *promising* model for middle and high schools pilot tested in the Los Angeles area and now operating in 15 of California's 58 counties. GRIP involves parents, school administrators, teachers, community organizations, and gang experts in keeping youth out of gangs. Schools with GRIP provide counseling, sports, cultural activities, job training, apprenticeships and career exploration opportunities, and opportunities for positive interaction with police officers. The major goals of the program are to tie youth to community organizations and to commit businesses and community groups to providing positive activities to youth. No evaluation data are available. [Contact: Chuck Nichols, Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office, California Department of Education, 560 J Street, Suite 260, Sacramento, CA 95814, Tel: 916-323-1026, cnichols@cde.ca.gov]

G. Community Involvement

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BB/BS) is a *demonstrated* mentoring strategy for adolescents. Although BB/BS agencies serve youth in need of adult guidance and friendship, they tend to refer high-risk youth to other, more appropriate community agencies. BB/BS maintains strict volunteer recruitment and training procedures. Nationally, BB/BS mentoring relationships last an average of 1½ years, and the adults and youth spend time together about three times per month. An evaluation by Public/Private Ventures (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995) found that Little Brothers and Sisters had less drug use, better academic performance, and better relationships with their parents than comparable youth who did not participate in the program. [Contact: Big

Brothers Big Sisters of America, 230 North 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-1538, Tel: 215-567-7000, Fax: 215-567-0394, bbbsa@aol.com]

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a *demonstrated* short-term change program that motivates families to deal with processes, such as intense negative affect, which prevent change. Specific strategies are then individualized for families to produce positive changes in family communication and problem solving, parenting, and the use of community resources. In rigorous evaluations FFT has consistently produced sustained reductions in juvenile recidivism and sibling entry into high-risk activities when compared to a variety of other individual and group-based treatments (Elliot, 1997). These reductions in adolescent disruptive behavior disorders have been accomplished at lower expense than alternative approaches. [Contact: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Institute of Behavioral Sciences, University of Colorado at Boulder, Campus Box 442, Boulder, CO 80309-0442, Tel: 303-492-8465; or Project Coordinator Kathie Shafer, 801-585-1807, Shafer@psych.utah.edu]

The Self Enhancement Program is a *demonstrated* strategy based on a relationship model for students ages 7 through 18. Prosocial norms are taught through classroom education in conflict resolution and anger management, emphasis on six standards of conduct, exposure education through trips to hospital trauma centers and juvenile detention facilities, general antiviolence campaigns, and continuous mentoring by program staff through the youth's preadolescent and adolescent years. This program has been found effective in decreasing handgun and other weapon carrying, and fighting (Gabriel, Hopson, Haskins, & Powell, 1996). [Contact: Self Enhancement, Inc., 3920 N. Kerby Avenue, Portland, OR 97227, Tel: 503-249-1712, Fax: 503-249-1955]

The Strengthening Families Program is a *demonstrated* model for children ages 6–10. It was originally tested with urban, drug abusing parents in out-patient treatment. It has been culturally modified and found effective with African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic families as well. Parents and children attend 14 weekly sessions of 2 hours each. Parents and children attend separate sessions during the first hour, during which time parents learn about family management and children focus on social skills. The groups unite during the second hour for family skills training. To increase participation, incentives such as snacks, transportation, and rewards are used. Evaluations have found significant improvements in parenting skills, children's prosocial behavior, and family relationships (Kumpfer, Molguard, & Spoth, 1996). [Contact: Connie Tait, Department of Health Promotion and Education, 300 S. 1850 E., Room 215, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112, Tel: 801-585-9201, Fax: 801-581-5872]

Families and Schools Together (FAST) is a *promising* social-support-enhancing program that builds protective factors into the lives of children ages 4–9. After referral by an elementary school teacher, parents who have completed a FAST program make home visits to invite children and their families to participate in the program. Families are clustered in groups of 10 to 12, according to where their children attend school, and attend 8 weekly sessions of highly

interactive and fun activities led by a team of professionals from the community. During these sessions parents learn the following strategies for increasing the social bonds of children:

- play therapy, in which parents spend at least 15 minutes per day playing with their children in a nondirective, nonjudgmental manner
- structured interactive activities that involve the whole family but do not allow for any criticism (for example, sharing a meal, discussing feelings, constructing a family flag)
- parent empowerment, in which parents become part of the program implementation team and learn that they can be the primary prevention agents for their children
- school/community partnerships, which evolve as parents of children attending the same school get to know each other and increase their involvement with the school.

Following this initial phase, groups of families run their own meetings for 2 years while continuing to receive support from the FAST team as needed. FAST strengthens communities, schools, and families by reaching out to socially isolated families, creating support networks, and encouraging parents to take leadership roles in the program. Research has found that FAST children made

significant improvements in conduct disorder, anxiety/withdrawal, and attention span over time and that these improvements were still evident 2 years later (McDonald, Billingham, Conrad, Morgan, & Payton, 1997). [Contact: Lynn McDonald, FAST Project, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706, Tel: 608-263-9476, Fax: 608-263-6488, mrmcdona@facstaff.wisc.edu]

Garden of Hope is a *promising* communitywide program initiated by the Mount Airy (NC) school system, Housing Authority, and Police Department to give youth positive alternatives to drugs and crime. The collaborative now consists of 24 agencies, each of which offers at least one program every month. The program regularly offers—

- summer and after school programs
- a child center that prepares preschoolers who live in public housing for school
- family planning and parenting classes
- medical and dental screening
- food, nutrition, and cooking classes
- mentoring and tutoring programs
- college scholarships for at-risk youth.

The program facilitators noted that in targeted areas drug activity decreased in relation to the frequency of program activities. In addition, high-risk youth who have been given mentors have shown significant increases in their achievement test scores (Markwood & Kyle, 1997). [Contact: Polly Long, Coordinator of Volunteers, Mount Airy City Schools, 202 Hylton Street, Mount Airy, NC 27030, Tel: 336-786-9763, Fax: 336-789-6074]

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